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A TABLET ERECTED BY THE  
TRUSTEES OF THE MUSEUM  
IN MEMORY OF THE LATE  
J. PIERPONT MORGAN

AGAINST the northwest pier supporting the central dome of the main Fifth Avenue hall of the Museum has been erected a sculptured tablet in memory of John Pierpont Morgan, thus carrying out a project initiated several years ago. In April, 1913, immediately following the death of Mr. Morgan, a committee of the Trustees of the Museum, consisting of Edward D. Adams, George F. Baker, George Blumenthal, John L. Cadwalader, and William Church Osborn, was appointed to consider the erection of some sort of fitting memorial to the late President of the Museum. Upon the death of Mr. Cadwalader, Lewis Cass Ledyard was appointed in his place on this important committee. In 1914 the commission to execute the memorial, which was to take the form of a sculptured tablet, was given to Paulanship, and upon its execution he has spent the last six and a half years.

The memorial tablet takes the form of a stone slab 11 feet 2 inches in height by 5 feet 4 inches in width, and with a projection from the wall of 6½ inches. This is surrounded by panels with figures in high relief and surmounted by a crowning member of scroll foliage ornament. The stone used is called Champville and comes from France; it is one of the limestone family,

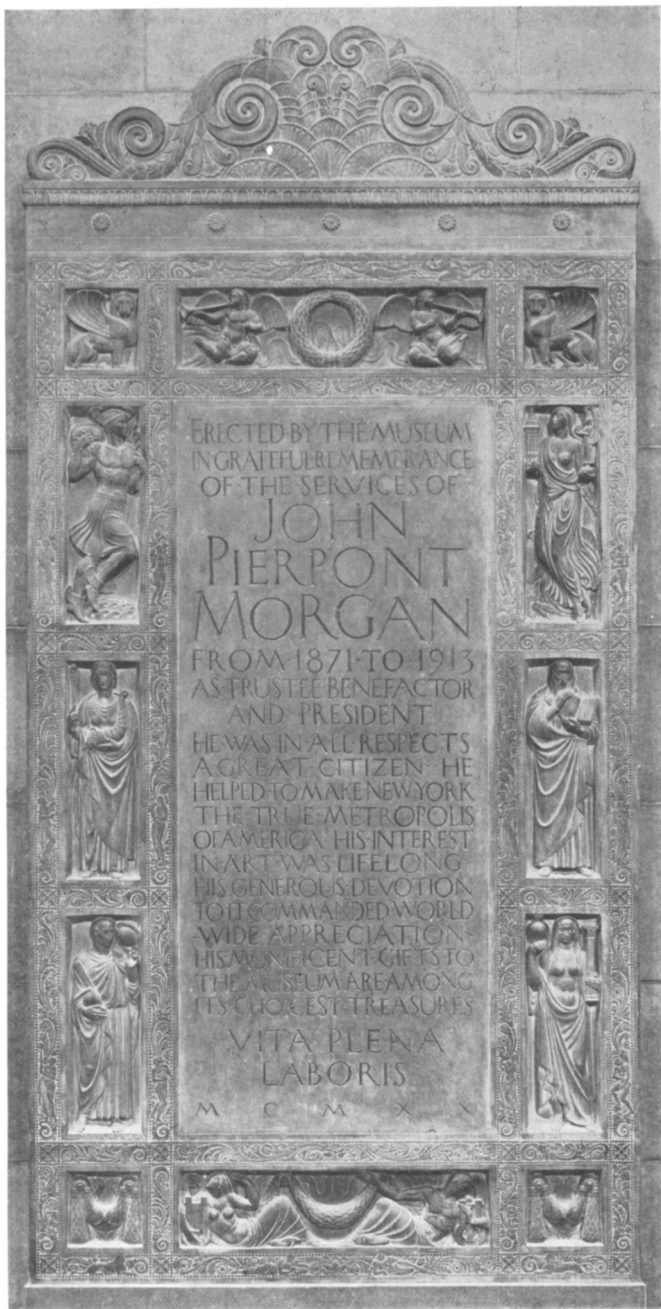
very fine in grain, and lends itself well to detailed relief sculpture.

Upon the central slab is engraved as a principal motif the following inscription written by the late Honorable Joseph H. Choate:

ERECTED BY THE MUSEUM  
IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE  
OF THE SERVICES OF  
JOHN  
PIERPONT  
MORGAN  
FROM 1871 TO 1913  
AS TRUSTEE BENEFACTOR  
AND PRESIDENT  
HE WAS IN ALL RESPECTS  
A GREAT CITIZEN HE  
HELPED TO MAKE NEW YORK  
THE TRUE METROPOLIS  
OF AMERICA HIS INTEREST  
IN ART WAS LIFELONG  
HIS GENEROUS DEVOTION  
TO IT COMMANDED WORLD-  
WIDE APPRECIATION  
HIS MUNIFICENT GIFTS TO  
THE MUSEUM ARE AMONG  
ITS CHOICEST TREASURES  
VITA PLENA  
LABORIS

"Flanking the inscription on the left from top to bottom are panels containing allegorical representations of Commerce, Finance, and Science, while on the right-hand side the figures of Art, Literature, and





TABLET IN MEMORY OF THE LATE J. PIERPONT MORGAN  
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COMMERCE, FINANCE, AND  
SCIENCE

Archaeology are typified.<sup>1</sup> Above, in the central panel, is a laurel wreath with two winged putti and in the upper corners are winged lions, symbols of immortality. Below the inscription the main panel contains two figures, male and female, playing upon lyres in attitudes extolling and lamenting. A festoon carries through the background of this panel and is the main motif in the panels in the lower corners.

"A rich border design in the relief of flowing floreated ornament surrounds the panels and is interspersed with small figures appropriate to the meaning of the panels in relationship with which they are placed. Thus, Archaeology has two supplementary figures in the border, one of a man with a shovel and the other of a figure holding a sphinx, typifying the means by which Archaeology makes its discoveries and the mystery of it. On the sides of the stone is also low-relief ornament with figured representations of the signs of the Zodiac. They symbolize the Cycle of the Year or the Compass of Life."

Altogether there are fifty figures, large and small, on the memorial stone. In this work may be traced the influences of the art of Egypt, Greece, and the Renaissance, as well as that of the Far East, all of which, leaving their impressions upon Manship's treatment of form, have affected the style of his art. The range of influences displayed here in the artist's work is suggestive of the many countries and periods that appealed to the catholic taste of the great collector and princely giver of whose intense interest in and devotion to art this tablet is reared as a perpetual reminder.

<sup>1</sup>The explanation of the symbolism is given here in the words of the artist.

ART, LITERATURE, AND  
ARCHAEOLOGY